



Ancient Monuments & Historic
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CARISBROOKE CASTLE

ISLE OF WIGHT

Official Guide

Price One Shilling

CARISBROOKE CASTLE stands just south of the village of Carisbrooke about one mile S.W. of Newport. Buses from Newport to Yarmouth and Freshwater pass through the village, and in summer months there is a local service to the Castle only.

HOURS OF OPENING

	<i>Weekdays</i>	<i>Sundays</i>
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CARISBROOKE CASTLE

ISLE OF WIGHT

BY THE LATE

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Description

*Carisbrooke Castle has three periods of work to show:
Roman, Mediaeval and Elizabethan*

THE entrance to the Castle is from the west, over a red brick bridge, and through a gateway bearing in its pediment the initials of Queen Elizabeth and the date 1598. This belongs to the outer lines of defence begun in 1587, but chiefly built between 1597 and 1600, under the superintendence of an Italian engineer, Federigo Gianibelli.

A stone bridge crossing the moat leads to the gatehouse which forms the entrance to the courtyard of the Castle. The front with its drum towers and arched gateway was built about 1335, but the upper parts of the towers, with their gunports and the machicolations over the gate are of later date. On the parapet is a shield with the arms of Wydville, argent a fesse and a quarter gules, pointing to a date about 1470, when Anthony Wydville, Lord Scales, was lord of the Castle. The gateway shows three portcullis grooves, one in the inner 14th century arch, a second partly blocked by the 14th century work, just within the same arch, and a third arch in the curtain wall. This arch and the walls of the passage on either side of it date from the first half of the 13th century, but even so are not the first work on the site. A Norman gateway, of the middle of the 12th century, must have preceded them, since the curtain walls which enclose the courtyard on all sides are of that date, though much patched with later work.* The wooden doors in the inner gateway are of the 15th century, and formerly opened not into the open air as now, but into an inner gatehouse, which is mentioned in a 13th century survey of the Castle.

Entering the courtyard, on the right is the caretaker's office, a 16th century building with later insertions.† To the east of it is the modern chapel, consecrated in 1905, and standing on the site of the old chapel of St. Nicholas. The base courses of the 13th century buttresses are to be seen on its east and north sides, and the south doorway is restored on the lines of its 13th century predecessor. At the west end of the chapel is a vestibule with a stone screen and gallery over, and on the

* The 12th century masonry has small neatly squared dressings of Binsted stone, and the walling is set in deep yellow mortar: later repairs generally have large quoins of Bonchurch stone. The difference is well seen in the Keep.

† Stabling or outhouses originally.

west wall is a bronze bust of King Charles I. A scheme of decoration and fitting up of the chapel has been carried out as a war memorial, and includes stone panelling between the windows and a richly decorated roof. To the left of the gatehouse, and set against the north curtain wall, are the remains of a ruined two-story building which has had two bay windows towards the courtyard. It was built by Sir George Carey late in the 16th century, on the site of a 13th century building, and doubtless contained guest rooms and the like. Of the building that preceded it little remains, but the base of a shaft against the north wall shows that it had a stone vaulted ground story and was evidently of importance. It dates from the time of the Countess Isabel, 1263-1293, and the position must be that of the Great Kitchen built in 1287.

To the east stand the principal domestic buildings of the Castle. Those parts not in ruin were until recently in use by the Governor when in residence, and follow the ordinary plan of a mediaeval house, with a great hall having at its upper end the private rooms, and at its lower end the kitchens and offices. The earliest detail now to be seen is the two-light window, of the end of the 12th century, in the east wall of the hall, and it is probable that much of the walling of the hall is of this date. The hall is 21 ft. 6 ins. wide by 57 ft. long, 13 ft. of the length being taken up by the lobby at the north end which occupies the position of the screens. Doorways of 13th century date open from the lobby east and west, and an alteration in the angle of the side walls at this point suggests that this part is an addition to the 12th century building, which may have ended near the line of the existing wooden partition. A straight joint in the west wall, some 10 ft. south of the screens, may mark the position of the 12th century west doorway. At the S.E. angle of the hall is an opening to a small recess, representing the position of the stairs leading to the original solar or great chamber, now destroyed; and set at right angles to the east wall of the hall, at its south end, is the chapel of St. Peter, built by the Countess Isabel about 1270. Its internal measurements are only 19 ft. 6 ins. by 12 ft. 6 ins. and it now serves merely as a staircase, but enough remains to show that it was a beautiful little room, stone vaulted in two bays, with a four-light east window and arcaded side walls each having a single lancet window. In the west wall was a tall arched recess 5 ft. wide and the doorway was probably in this position, but later alterations have destroyed the evidence. In the west jamb of the lancet in the south wall is a squint, cut through to give a view of the altar from the buildings which preceded the existing 14th century buildings to the south. These consist of a three-story block, the principal room being the solar or Great Chamber set against the south wall of the chapel. Beneath it is

a kitchen, with large mullioned windows east and west and lintels with blank shields on them: the Solar has a fine original fireplace in its south wall. There is a range of rooms to the south of the Solar, with a projecting stair turret: the whole block appears to have been built towards the end of the 14th century by William de Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, and has the Montacute arms, three fusils, on the S.W. buttress. The Great Hall was remodelled at this time, and received the fine fireplace in its east wall, which by blocking the early two-light windows already described was the means of preserving it. All other windows were altered, and in modern times have been renewed. The buildings at the north end of the hall, between it and the north curtain, have been much altered and are now ruinous, but the remains of the chamber built by Countess Isabel late in the 13th century are notable for the fine two-light window with window seats in the curtain wall; a second like window adjoined it, but has been nearly destroyed by a later fireplace and chimney, and little now survives. The original fireplace, with a stone hood, was in the north wall, and near it is a floor drain running out through the curtain wall. Late in the 16th century, when Sir George Carey was Governor, the room was turned into a kitchen and enlarged westward, where part of a fireplace and brick oven are to be seen, and at this time it seems that an upper story was added not only to this block, but to the hall and chapel. It is to these rooms that attaches the chief historical interest of the Castle to-day, as having been those occupied by King Charles I from November, 1647, to September, 1648, and afterwards by his children, the Duke of Gloucester and the Princess Elizabeth. Several windows in this wall have been supposed to be those through which the King attempted to escape; but the old descriptions make it clear that they were not in the curtain wall, but overlooked the courtyard. (See below, p. 11.)

Following the north curtain wall eastwards, a long and steep flight of steps leads up the great earthen mound on which the Keep stands. The Keep is an irregular polygon in plan, dating from the middle of the 12th century, and was originally considerably higher than now. It is entered through a vaulted gateway, built about 1335, and having a portcullis groove in the outer arch. The walls now dividing the area within the Keep are of late 16th century date, but two 15th century fireplaces set back to back, projecting from the east wall, are relics of a former plan, and near by is an arched recess of the 13th century, containing a latrine or *garderobe*. In the 16th century room on the north is a Well 160 feet deep, formerly worked by a wheel like that still in use in the courtyard below. This well is probably the original well of the Castle, that in the courtyard having perhaps been made by Countess Isabel in 1275. At the west of this room is an original *garderobe* recess of the middle of the 12th century. De-

scending from the Keep and taking the path cut in the side of the mound, the east curtain wall is reached, its junction with the wall being marked by a 14th century turret, from which a wing wall ran up the steep slope to join the wall of the Keep, thus continuing the circuit of the curtain walls.

The east curtain wall, like the rest, is of 12th century date, with later repairs, especially in the parapets, but a large gap is broken in it opposite the late 15th century group of buildings now almost entirely modernized. At its S.E. angle the curtain had originally a small rectangular tower, the remains of which are now exposed, within a large bastion built for artillery in 1587. It bears the date 1601, which must refer to its completion. The south curtain has midway in its length a turret of small projection, part of the original work, but much repaired, and containing widely splayed brick jambs of Elizabethan date, which seem to have belonged to a window cut through the turret wall, and now built up with modern masonry on the inner face. The former existence of a room set against the wall is implied.

The S.W. angle of the walls, like the S.E. angle, shows the remains of an original tower enclosed in a bastion begun in 1587, but bearing the date 1602. It has a postern doorway opening to the westward. The west curtain is a good specimen of Norman masonry, but, as elsewhere, the parapet walls are of later date. Passing the top of the western gatehouse, the curtain turns at the N.W. angle, and shows no signs of having had a tower here. The actual angle has been rebuilt, but follows the line of the original wall.

From this point the modern stairs descend into the courtyard and the visitor may go down to the Museum in the former Governor's lodgings: or to the Well at the S.E. corner. This is larger and probably of later date than the Well in the Keep, and is enclosed in a late 16th century well-house. It is worked by a large wooden wheel, a donkey providing the motive power. The wheel may be the "tread wheel" recorded to be made in 1587. Beyond the Well, in the east curtain wall at the foot of the mound of the Keep, is a doorway leading to the unwallled eastern court of the Castle. A ditch separates it from the eastern curtain, but on the north, south and east it has high earthen ramparts, the two latter showing remains of platforms and masonry breastworks of Elizabethan date. The N.E. and S.E. angles have been broken through and have rectangular emplacements occupied by 18th century iron guns.

Looking back at the steep eastern banks on which the walls of the mediaeval Castle stand, the visitor will notice remains of masonry

in the lower parts of the banks, at what was in fact the original ground level before the making of the earthworks.

This masonry is best seen on the east side of the great mound on which the Keep stands, where it remains to a height of 5 feet and more, showing a base course and rubble walling with occasional herringbone masonry. The angle towards the N.E. is rounded, and in the E. face is the base of a small rounded turret, which is solid as far as it is preserved. The whole is built in a coarse mortar with pebbles.

About midway in the east bank of the Castle, a little to the south of the middle, there is an opening, the walling coming inwards on either side, leaving a space of some 22 feet as an entrance.

All round the Castle this early masonry, often showing herringbone coursing, can be seen at intervals, but there is no other trace of an opening, and except for the indication of a turret a little to the north of the west gateway of the Castle, no other special feature.

The rounded angles and the type of masonry suggest a Roman origin for this walled enclosure, which measures 450 feet N. to S. by 475 feet E. to W. The plan of the gateway and the small turret are, however, quite different to anything in any of the Roman coast fortresses, such as Pevensey, Portchester or Burgh Castle, and the distance from the sea and the situation on a hill-top seem to place Carisbrooke in a different category from the rest. In the circumstances, excavation of the site is practically impossible, and it must suffice for the moment to say that this walled fort, while presenting Roman features, shows also affinities with the native hill forts which no definitely Roman building in Britain possesses.

Enclosing the whole of the Castle are the curtains and bastions, begun it would seem in 1587, but not systematically constructed and finished till 1597-1600. The extant building accounts of these years call them "certain fortifications hitherto conceived, to be presently finished."

The general outline is rectangular, with bastions, called bulwarks in the accounts, at the four angles, and a fifth bastion capping a salient in front of the gatehouse on the west. A "platform" previously existed in front of the gatehouse and was destroyed in the course of the work, and the old earthworks of the east bailey, called here the old barbican or platform, were altered and provided with parapet walls of which part still remains on the east and south sides. In three of the bastions are casemates (*casa matta*), each loopholed for two guns, defending the east and south curtains, but there is none on the north and west. The outer walls of the bastions are set at an angle with the curtains, so that the ground in front of the bastions can be

raked by fire from the adjoining bastions. There are two lines of ditch, the inner called *fossetta* in the accounts, the outer the *strata coperta* or covered way. The angle of the covered way in the middle of the east side is protected by a small earthwork described as "the barbican of the angle of the *strata coperta*," and in the casemates are passages and doorways opening to the ditches in front of the curtains. On the north the curtain wall sets outwards to avoid cutting into the mound of the Keep, and is carried westward on the new line to the N.W. bastion, which owing to the steep fall of the ground is much smaller than the other angle bastions. The walls of bastions and curtains are finished with earthen banks, except on the west bastion and S.W. curtain, where low walls take their place, but the accounts show that this work is contemporary with the rest. There are revetments, on the banks, below the S.E. and S.W. bastions, or "Knights" as the accounts of 1587 call them, of the western bailey; these are clearly contemporary with the bastions and meant to strengthen their foundations.

History

CARISBROOKE first appears in history as Wihthgarasburh, the fortress of the men of Wight. The name must be that given to it by the invading Saxons, who in 530, under Cerdic and Cynric his son, here defeated the Islanders. The stone-walled fort which underlies the Norman earthworks, and is probably of late Roman construction, may be supposed to be the scene of this battle, and the analogy with the post-Roman occupation of Pevensey (Anderida), and the slaughter of the Britons there by the Saxons, goes to support such a view. At the conquest the Island was granted to William Fitz Osbern, a kinsman of the Conqueror, and after his death in 1071 his son Roger held it till 1078, when he forfeited his lands for rebellion against the King. To this period must belong the construction of the earthworks of the present Castle. Domesday Book makes this clear in its description of the Manor of Avington, in which the Castle stands. The entry runs thus :

"The King holds Avington. Donnus held it in the time of King Edward, and it was then rated at 2½ hides, but now at 2 hides only, because the Castle stands upon one virgate of land."

A virgate is about 20 acres, and this area, which was part of the rateable land in the days of King Edward the Confessor, had been appropriated as the site of the Castle between 1066 and 1086, the date of the Domesday Survey.

The Castle remained in the King's hands till 1100, when the lordship of the Island was granted to Richard (I) de Redvers, who died in 1107, leaving Carisbrooke to his son Baldwin (I). In this time the true importance of the Castle as an island fortress is clearly shown. In a land campaign it could have little to do; the possessor of Carisbrooke had more concern with the sea. Baldwin having sided with the Empress Maud against King Stephen, retired to the Island after being defeated at Exeter in 1136, meaning to use his Castle as a base from which to make sea raids on the shipping of England and Normandy. The King proceeded to besiege him, but there was no need to push matters to an extremity, for the Castle water supply failed and Baldwin had to surrender and was exiled. He was, however, allowed to return in 1153, and died as Lord of the Island in 1155, being buried in the Cistercian Abbey of Quarr, which he had founded. His son Richard (II) succeeded him, dying in 1162, and being followed by his two sons Baldwin (II) 1162-80, and Richard (III) 1180-84. The lordship then went to William de Vernon, a younger son of Baldwin

I, who held it for 32 years. After him came his grandson Baldwin (III) 1216-1245, whose son Baldwin (IV) died in 1262 of poison, as it was thought, and made way for one of the most notable of the owners of Carisbrooke, his sister Isabel, who had married William de Fortibus, Earl of Albemarle, and was left a widow in 1261.

At her death in 1293, the lordship and Castle came to the Crown, and with an interval when Piers Gaveston held the Castle, 1308-9, so remained till 1355, when Edward III, who as Earl of Chester had been given the lordship in 1312, granted it to his daughter Isabel. She married Ingram de Couci, who on Richard II's accession had to choose between his French and English allegiance, and resigned his English honours. In 1385 Richard II granted the Lordship to William de Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, who, dying in 1397, was succeeded by Edward Earl of Rutland. During the 14th century, the Island had much experience of French raids and the Castle was more than once attacked, though never taken.

The lords of the island and Castle in the 15th century were :—

- 1405 Joan, Queen of Henry IV.
- 1409 Edward, Duke of York, who as Earl of Rutland had held it from 1397 to 1399, when he was deprived by Henry IV.
- 1415 Philippa, widow of the Duke of York.
- 1431 Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester.
- 1446 The Crown, on the attainder of Duke Humphrey.
- 1453 Edmund, Duke of Somerset.
- 1457 Henry, Duke of Somerset, son of Edmund.
- 1461 The Crown, on the attainder of Duke Henry.
- 1465 Sir Geoffrey Gate (the Castle only).
- 1466 Anthony Wydville, Lord Scales.
- 1483 The Crown, on the attainder of Lord Scales.
- 1485 Sir Edward Wydville, who died the same year.
- 1485 The Crown.
- 1495 Sir Reginald Bray.

From this time the lordship of the Island remained with the Crown and only captains of the Castle were appointed.

The list of Captains is as follows :—

- 1509 Sir Nicholas Wadham.
- 1520 James Worsley.
- 1538 Thomas, Lord Cromwell.
- 1540 Richard Worsley.
- 1553 Captain William Girling.

- 1558 William, Marquess of Winchester.
- 1560 Richard Worsley.
- 1565 Edward Horsey.

In the time of Sir George Carey, 1582-1603, the title of governor began to be used and has continued till the present day.

The outbreak of the Civil War in 1642 found Jerome, Earl of Portland, as Governor. Being a strong Royalist, he was removed by Parliament, and though the Island was largely Royalist there was a considerable body of Parliamentarians. These, headed by the then Mayor of Newport, demanded the surrender of the Castle, which at the time was tenanted only by Lady Portland and her children, with a few friends and servants. Lady Portland was quite ready to resist, unless honourable terms were granted, but the odds were too great and a capitulation was arranged.

Philip, Earl of Pembroke, was appointed Governor and in 1647 was succeeded by Colonel Hammond.

To this fact is due the association of the Castle with King Charles I, which has made Carisbrooke a place of pilgrimage to so many. Colonel Hammond was the brother of the King's Chaplain, and might be expected to be at least not hostile to the King. And the remote position of Carisbrooke may have seemed an advantage, when Charles's escape from Hampton Court was being planned. But the real source of the troubles was not removed by any change of place. Only some form of agreement with the Parliament could have done that, and no agreement was possible.

Though on reaching Carisbrooke he was treated with respect and allowed to go where he pleased—as he had been at Hampton Court—the sense of being a “close prisoner,” which had prompted his escape from Hampton Court, soon made itself apparent here also. His rides abroad were stopped: his attendants were dismissed; he was kept within the boundaries of the Castle, the “old barbican” or east bailey being laid out for him as a bowling green, with a portion on the south side. The immediate cause of this was a clumsy and ill-managed attempt to rescue him, arranged by Captain Burley, who was captured and executed, and henceforth the King was thrown on his own resources, walking on the ramparts or on the bowling green, or spending his time in reading and writing. The *Eikon Basilike* and *Suspiria Regalia* are thought to have been written by him in these days.

A second attempt at rescue was better arranged, and its failure was due solely to Charles's want of forethought. It was organized by Henry Firebrace, and provided that the King, at a given signal, was to let himself down from his window by a cord, and would then be

gateway to the Keep, the Norman defences remained unaltered down to the end of the 16th century. The domestic buildings of the Castle, the chapel, hall, living rooms and offices, which were used by the first Norman lords, no longer exist. The modern walls of the present chapel of St. Nicholas stand on 13th century foundations, and the north doorway of the chapel has a little stonework of that period, but the oldest domestic work in the Castle is to be seen in the great hall, where a two-light window of the end of the 12th century exists in the east wall. The documentary history of the Castle buildings begins in the latter part of the 13th century, when the Countess Isabel, daughter of Baldwin de Redvers IV, and widow of William de Fortibus, Earl of Albemarle, held the Castle from 1263 to her death in 1293. She began the Chapel of St. Peter in 1270, and made a well in the "new garden" in the same year. This is probably the well now existing in the courtyard. In 1272 the great chamber was made anew with a tiled roof, and in 1275 the "new chamber of the Countess" was being built, apparently at the north end of the hall, with steps between it and the hall, and a covered way from the hall to the Kitchen.

In 1287 the house over the well is mentioned, and in this year the old kitchen was pulled down and a new one built in its place, 45 feet long by 32 wide and 16 high, with a louvre for the smoke. In 1291, a new wheel, with ropes and buckets, was made for the well.

At the Countess's death the Castle was sold to the Crown, and a survey taken in 1299 gives a list of the buildings then existing. The hall, with a great chamber and four other chambers, all standing over cellars, are mentioned, the great kitchen, the larder, and a large building containing the bakehouse and brewhouse, and having the granary at one end of it. There are two chapels, a large and a small (doubtless those of St. Nicholas and St. Peter), and it is recorded that they are maintained by the Abbot and Convent of Quarr. There was also an old and evidently disused chapel. The constable had a chamber over a cellar, and there was a chamber over the gatehouse, and another next the gate. Two tall towers with two stories of rooms existed, and two other towers "beneath the wall." The great tower or keep is not named. Other buildings are a well-house near the prison, two great stables, and a barn for hay and forage.

In the 14th century there is but little record of building. In 1335-6 expenses on the gatehouse and the gateway of the keep give the date of much of the work that is now to be seen, and while William de Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, held the Castle (1386-97), the block at the south end of the Great Hall was built, and the hall itself altered and provided with the great fireplace which still exists.

To the end of the 15th or early 16th century belong the much restored buildings at the S.E. of the bailey, and the arms of Wydville on the battlements of the West Gatehouse point to work done there in the time of Anthony de Wydville, lord of the Island 1467-93.

The last considerable additions were made by Sir George Carey, Governor from 1582 to 1603. He kept great state in his Castle, and besides making a large kitchen, added rooms above the great hall and St. Peter's Chapel, and over the buildings at the north end of the hall, next the curtain. To the west of these he also built a two-story block with bay windows, on the site of the older kitchen, now known as the Officers' Quarters. But the important work of this date was the addition begun in 1587, but chiefly made between 1597 and 1600, of outer lines of defence enclosing the old Castle and its two baileys. The first design, in 1587, was doubtless due in part to Sir George Carey, but there is a record of a payment of seventy shillings to Captain Peers, "for his paynes and expences comminge from Portesmouthe to direct and sett out the plotts for the places to be fortyfied." The latter work was carried out under Federigo Gianibelli, an Italian engineer of great repute, who also designed the fortifications of Antwerp, and in our own country those of Berwick-on-Tweed. They exist to-day in fairly perfect condition and are well worth examining as examples of the artillery defences of the time.

In modern times the buildings have been considerably repaired, the Governor's apartments drastically, by Hardwicke, while the chapel of St. Nicholas was rebuilt on the old foundations and consecrated in 1905.

The Governor's apartments now contain the Isle of Wight Museum.

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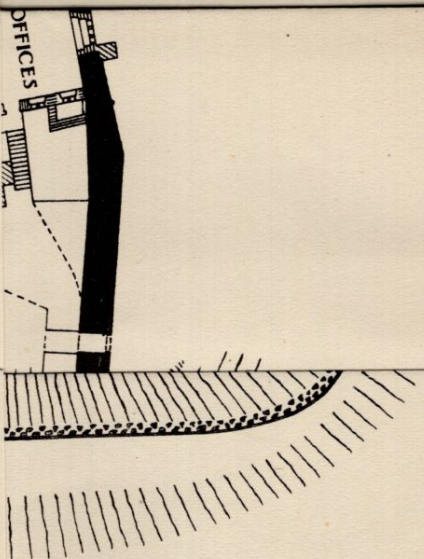
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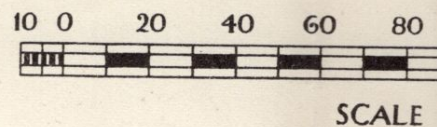
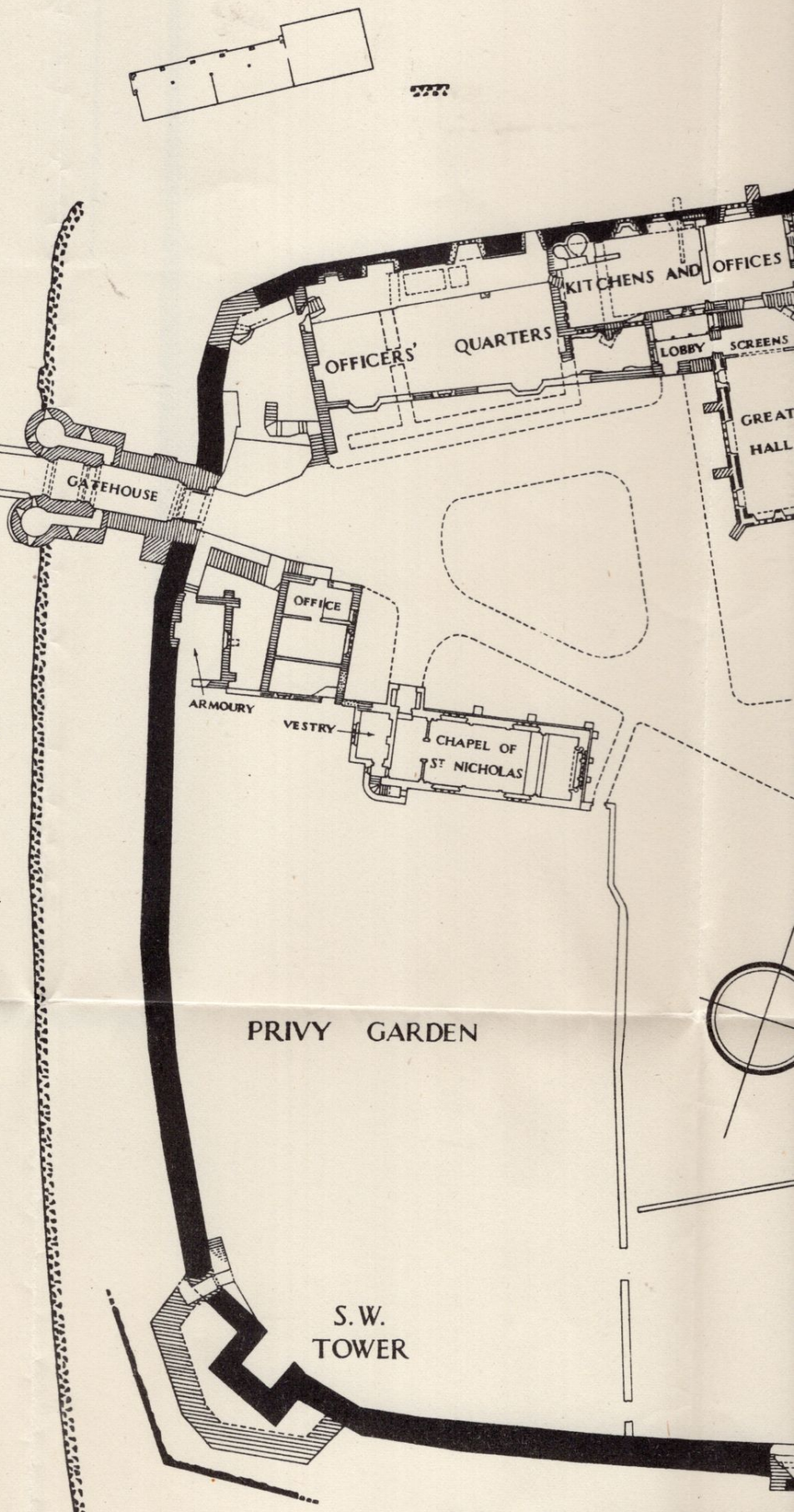
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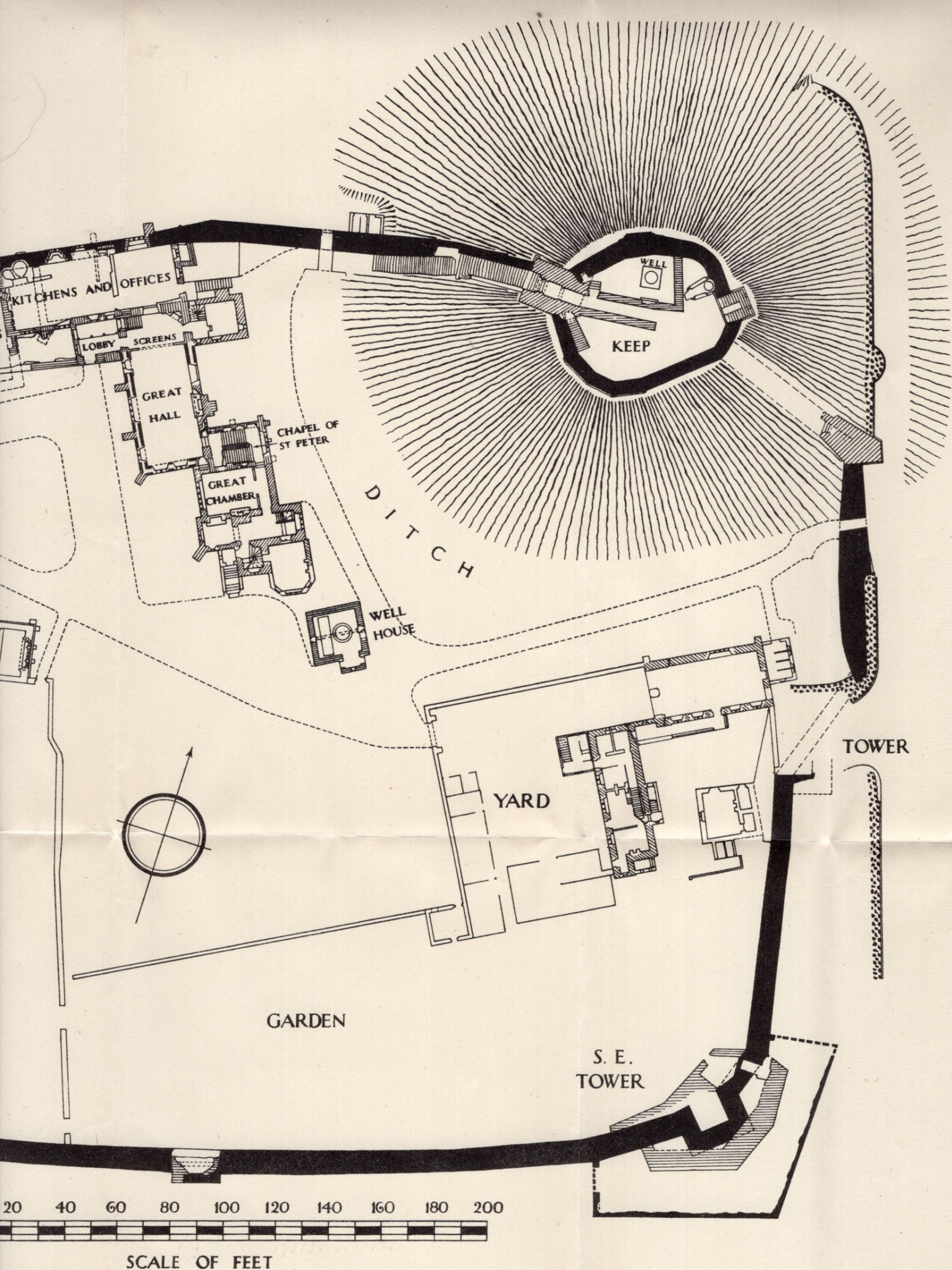


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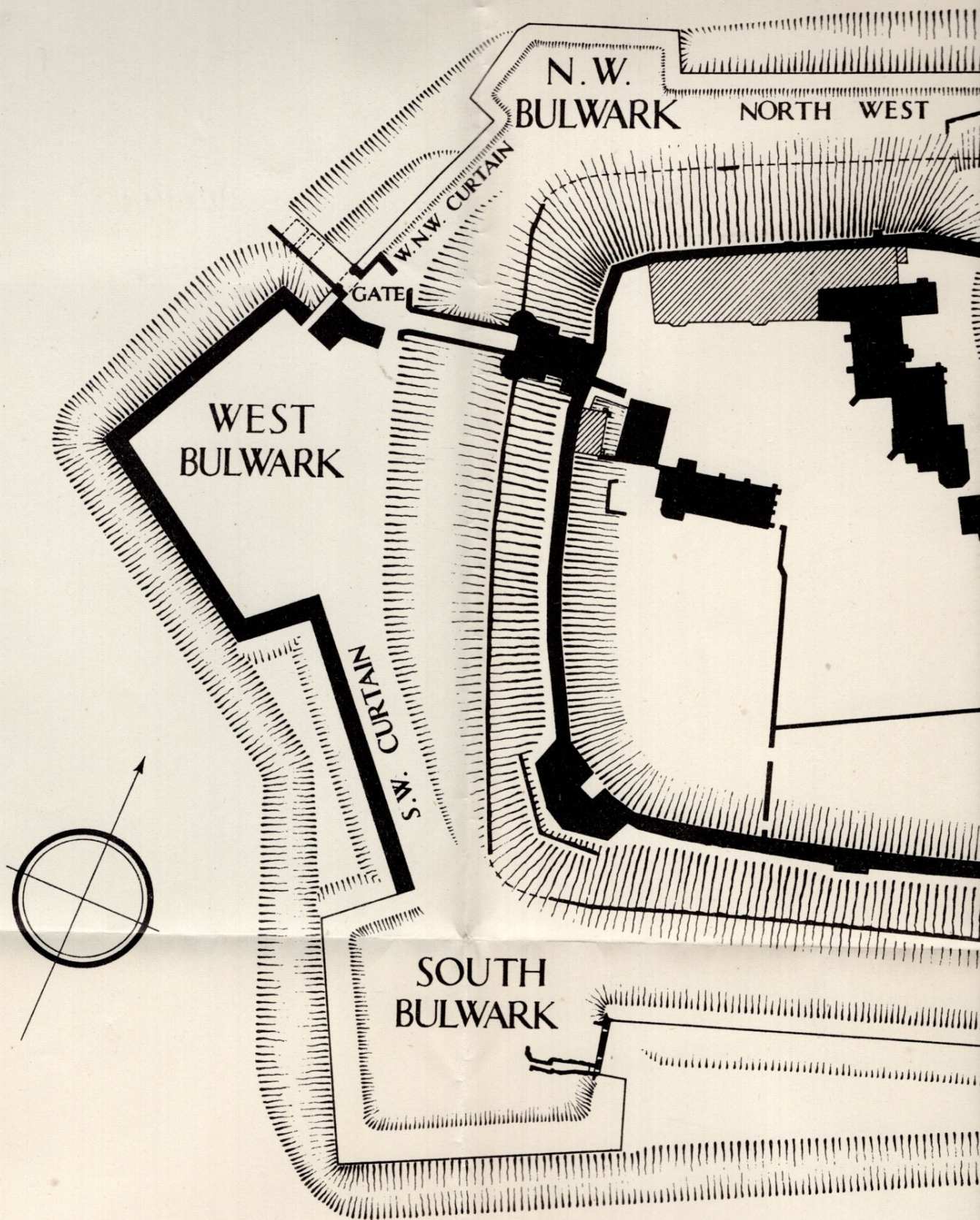
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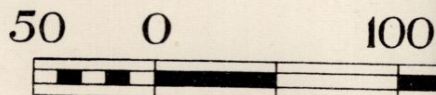
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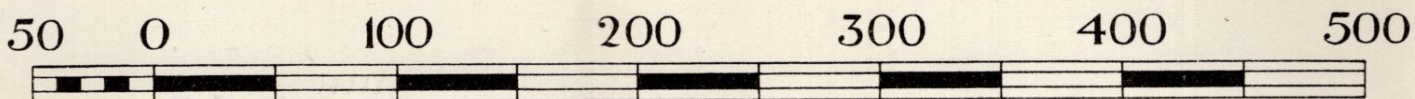
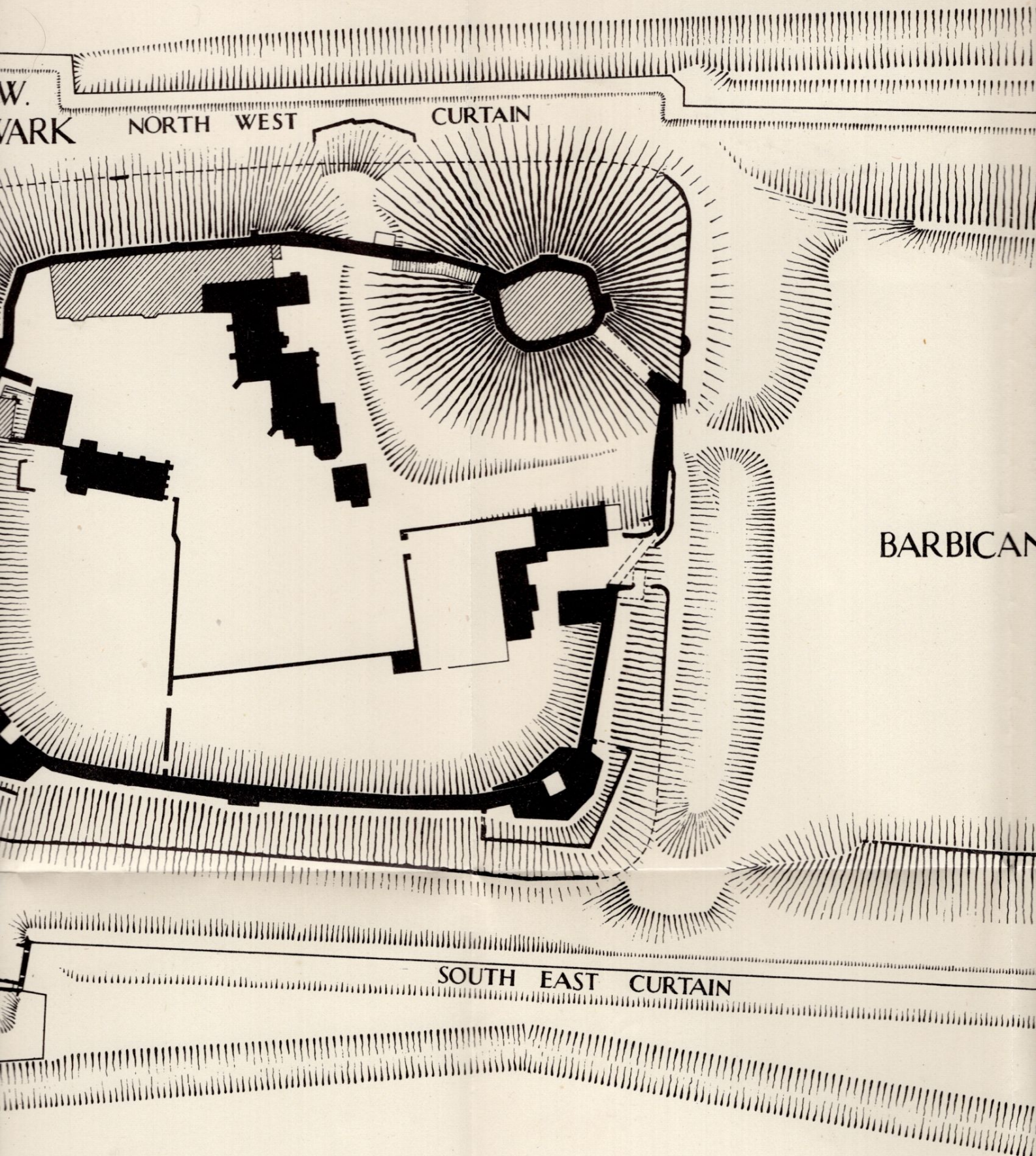


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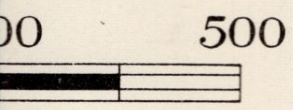
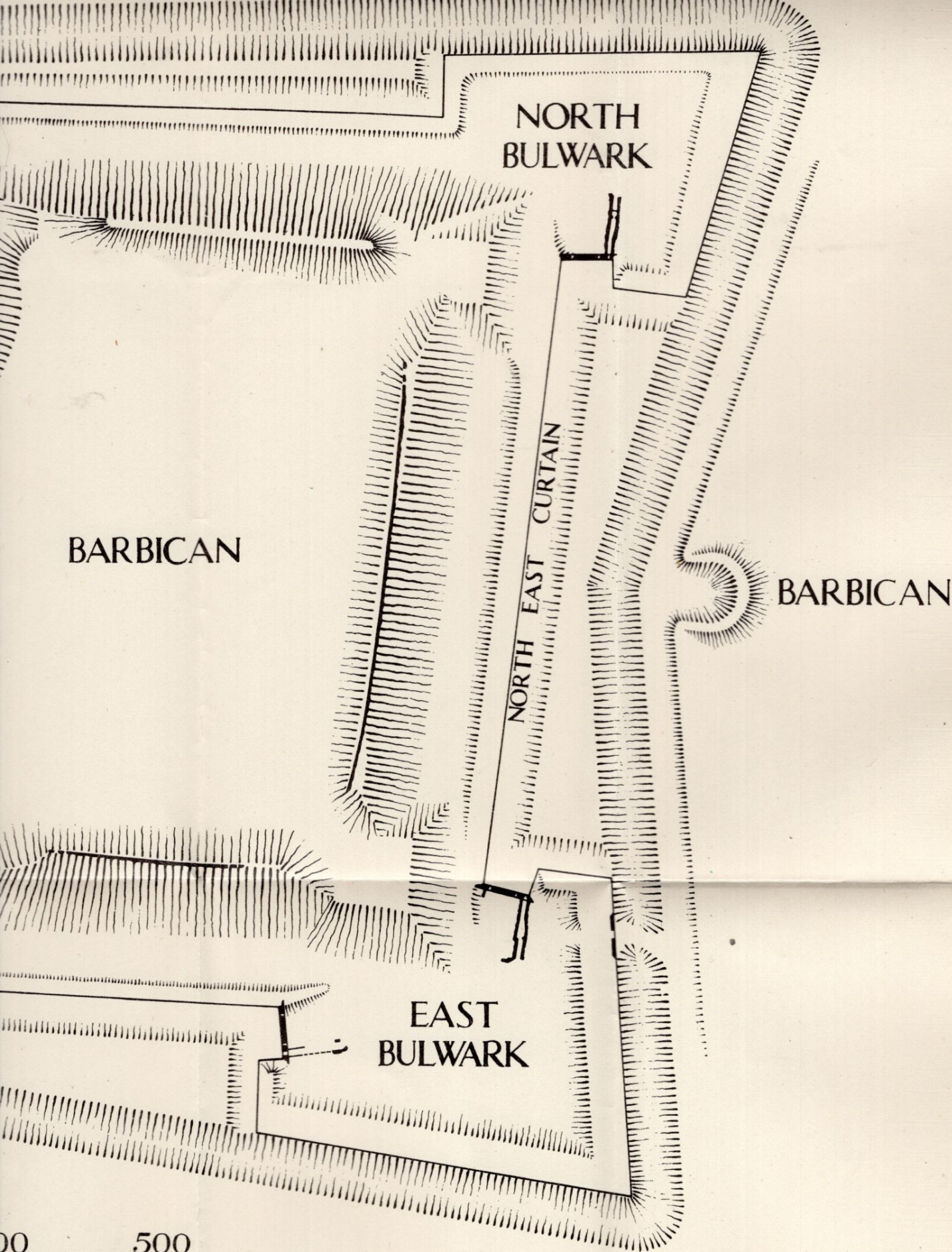
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